

**HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
March 28, 2007, 4:30 p.m.  
Council Chambers**

**PRESENT**

Greg Lewis  
Tony McClendon  
Akua Ofori-Boateng  
Gil Palmer  
John Roberts  
John Stroh

**ABSENT**

Trena Carter  
Ian Kohen  
Jay Myers  
Jason Staley

**\*\*\* Meeting Called to Order \*\*\***

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Director Arlette Tinsley, Deputy Director Lorraine Smith and Secretary, Lula Young.

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:**

Secretary Roberts called roll then requested any corrections to the February Minutes.

**Commissioner McClendon moved to accept the February Minutes as submitted, Commissioner Lewis seconded. Motion carried.**

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Commissioner Ofori-Boateng provided the Treasurer's report with the beginning balance, as of February 23, 2007, at \$4,781.74. One expense of \$11.39 was paid for the purchase of ticket stock for the annual dinner leaving a March 23, 2007 balance of \$4,770.35.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Director Tinsley advised that at the request of City Council members, Craig Hawes, Council Liaison, reviewed applications for the one open commissioner position. With the initial support of City Council, he has selected Rosalind Pegram to recommend for Council appointment to the Human Rights Commission on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Director Tinsley informed Commissioners that Ms. Pegram is a long-time Columbus resident who previously taught in Monroe County Schools and is currently a substitute teacher for BCSC and is actively pursuing a full-time position. Council Liaison Hawes also indicated his desire to have Jason Staley and Ian Kohen both, reappointed for second terms as Commissioners.

Director Tinsley continued her report on other issues, such as the numerous technical assistance issues and trainings being handled within the office. The Director announced that she will be spending the morning at Taylorsville Elementary in addition to the time spent within

other areas of the school system, on various civil rights trainings. Deputy Director Smith has completed multiple intakes due to a heavy intake case load.

Director Tinsley advised that the annual dinner is scheduled. Due to scheduling conflicts with the mayor's and speaker schedule along with The Commons lack of availability, we were unsuccessful in booking The Commons as the dinner location.

Director Tinsley voiced her appreciation to Commissioners Lewis, Roberts and former Commissioner Pat Bryant for their assistance in hand distributing essay and art contest packets to the schools in addition to Commissioner Lewis distributing the packets to all teachers via email. After some discussion and comments of interest for future contest topics, Director Tinsley advised that she and Deputy Director Smith will be sending out samples of past contest topics in order to provide a knowledge base for Commissioner volunteers to plan the next contest.

Commissioner Lewis requested clarification on the intake caseload. The Director and Deputy Director provided an overview of the process and average time commitment for each intake.

Director Tinsley issued an invitation for all to attend the Immigration Issues Forum on Monday, April 2, 2007, located at the Center for Teaching and Learning. John Clark from The Sagamore Institute will be speaking on the economic impact of immigration. Director Tinsley advised she will be speaking on the regional history of immigration.

#### **WILLIAM R. LAWS AWARD:**

Director Tinsley provided an overview of the Laws Award recipient selection process and introduced the members of the Laws Award Committee. Commissioner Greg Lewis, committee chair, along with Commissioners Roberts and Myers constituted the advisory committee.

Commissioner Lewis provided background information concerning the committee's process and review of the nominees. Commissioner Lewis went on to advise that the recommendation of the committee is to award Laura Hurt the 2007 Award based on her work within the community that goes beyond immigration issues. Commissioner Roberts added additional points of Ms. Hurt's community involvement and efforts to build a foundation the entire community can build on in future efforts to reach out to the children of this community. Discussion ensued.

**Commissioner Lewis moved to award the 2007 William R. Laws award to Laura Hurt. Commissioner Roberts seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **ANNUAL DINNER/ESSAY CONTEST:**

Director Tinsley confirmed the annual dinner date as May 9, 2007, at the Holiday Inn Conference Center. The contract was modified to allow motorized wheelchairs and allow for other reasonable accommodations.

#### **LIAISON UPDATES – GAY/STRAIGHT ALLIANCE:**

Director Tinsley advised that Commissioner Kohen had been detained in a conference and would be unable to provide his report of the last meeting of the G/SA. Director Tinsley advised that she had written the letter to House Representatives concerning Senate Joint Resolution 007 and those copies of the correspondence were sent to both the Mayor and Council Liaison. The responses received from the representatives were automated.

**LIAISON UPDATE – INTERFAITH FORUM:**

Commissioner Roberts reported he attended the Forum and facilitated the topic of, “Me and My Higher Power: What is the State of This Relationship”. The purpose was to give people a chance to come to grips, first and foremost, with ‘how do you see yourself in relationship to whatever higher power or you feel is the guiding force.’ The topic proved to be very interesting and thought provoking and made people turn introspectively.

**LIAISON UPDATE – MULTI-CULTURAL AWARENESS COMMITTEE:**

Commissioner Ofori-Boateng advised she has met with the committee chairperson, Rob Aspy to receive an overview and introduction to the committee prior to the next meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Commissioner McClendon acknowledged Commissioner Lewis as a pivotal player and narrator in a senior project play by Jacob Rutan. Commissioner Lewis portrayed Levi Coffin, a foremost conductor of the Underground Railroad in Indiana. Commissioner Lewis also recognized Commissioner McClendon’s role.

**ADJOURN:**

**Commissioner Lewis moved to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner McClendon seconded. Meeting adjourned.**